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AUG 19 2016

EPA-REGION 10

ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

At the convergences of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers there are signs that have been posted for decades. These signs state there should be no fishing, swimming, or consumption of marine life from these waters. The reasons are due to pollution and lead, mercury, and PCB contamination. To put it bluntly, our river system sucks! I know what goes into the Willamette River and do as much as humanly possible to avoid using it. I absolutely refuse to go into it. In the 90's I worked with Merchant's Exchange and the Clean Rivers Co-Op. I've been HAZMAT trained in 3 different industries, and because I own a pest control company, I am very aware of chemical usage of every type and toxicity. I understand these issues and am well aware of how chemicals can affect the environment.

When it comes to the contamination of the Willamette River and the way the EPA wants to handle this issue, I think it's ridiculous and should not be given a green light. You cannot focus on one small section of the river and expect to clean up the entire river system. That's like painting one window of a home and saying the whole house is painted. In order to truly restore the river, we must address the entire river system, not just a portion of it. We cannot focus on one 10 mile stretch of the river and ignore the fact that small towns up the river are dumping everything from sewage to business waste into the waterway. It's a bad idea for the EPA to spend billions of dollars on this issue when it will not make a difference unless these other areas are taken into account as well. Why are we even considering this project when there are far more pressing issues the city of Portland should be concentrating on? The Teledyne Wah Chang mess hasn't even been cleaned up yet, for example.

Zeroing in and closing off one stretch of the river for years will hurt our economy in ways the EPA isn't even considering. Traffic congestion will be worse, many will be put out of a job, small businesses will have to shut down, and taxes will go up. We're one of the highest taxed districts in the United States as it is. This tax-and-spend government needs to figure out some other way to fund things or stop altogether. They already overcharge us on taxes, and honestly, I don't want to cough up any more. Paying additional taxes takes money out of my pocket, from my family, and right off my table.

When you have citizens who lose their jobs you get a snowball effect that only worsens the economy. When someone loses their job the next to go is their car, followed by difficulty feeding their family, and sadly, far too many find themselves homeless. Portland, really the entire state of Oregon, is so anti-business and anti-growth that it's sickening. Portland needs more businesses, not less. Now is not the time to put another dent in our economy. Hurting the economy just complicates things and makes any recovery efforts a lot slower. Portland must become more pro-business in order to better the economy. If it doesn't, things will only go downhill even more. And, just like that snowball, the longer you're moving downhill the faster you get to the bottom.

There are so many other things that the money the EPA wants to complete the Willamette River cleanup could be set aside for. The government needs to back off and stop taking people's money in order to address what they consider to be a major issue. The EPA is asking for hundreds of millions of dollars that can be much better utilized to improve our community. There are far more pressing issues in Portland that money could be used for. Let's take care of things like the city's homeless problem, outrageous housing and rent prices, and lack of jobs that leave people unable to feed their families. It's time the government stops taking money from taxpayers to fund their political parties and agendas. Stop simply telling us it's good for the environment and the community. Prove it by actually using that money to create a thriving community for those who live there.

Sincerely,

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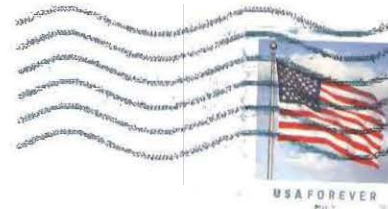


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